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[WHOLE NO. 55.]

ORIGINAL.

THE BELOVED STRAIN.

BY ANNA M. BATES.

Sing to me, gentle sister,
In the gathering dusk of night,
While the moon grows round and bright;
The cheek of the glowing sunset
Hath lost its crimson stain,
And now I would list in silence
To the old beloved strain.

It was sung in the years departed,
In our cabin rude and low,
Where the deer came down in the twilight
To drink from the clear stream's flow;
Then in the holy silence
We knelt by our mother's chair,
And this song rose sweetly after
The soft tones of prayer.

But unheeded are blowing the roses
We culled in our early hours—
Over the graves of our household
The red leaves are falling in showers;
Since then we have wildly wandered
Away from that sweet green vale,
And the freshness has gone from our spirits
And our cheeks are wan and pale.

Yet beautiful visions of memory
Will rise from the past to-night,
While over the trees of the forest
The eye stars twinkle bright;
While the balmy dews are falling
O'er the flowers—an angel throng—
Let me list the notes thrilling
Of that old beloved song.

For my tears will gently gather
As you sing to me once more
Of the mansions of our Father
On heaven's unfading shore;
Pensive as soft as the twilight
Will brood o'er my heart again,
As I list the notes thrilling
Of that old beloved strain.

The Unfortunate Belle.

BY MRS. L. M. HUTCHINSON.

Ella Cameron was a young lady of extreme beauty, and of scarcely equal accomplishments. Her vanity too was hardly less than her attractions. Her fondness of admiration was greater. She had no heart, little did she care for the feelings of others. Sensitive herself, and subject to extreme mortifications, yet it was of little consequence to her, whether she was the occasion of mortification to others or not. The attentions of young gentlemen flattered her, and still she received those of one only to reject them for the attentions of another. To have been deserted herself, would have been exceedingly trying to her sensibilities; but to abandon a suitor never cost her a pang. Nor was she satisfied with the attentions paid her at home. She loved to go to Saratoga and cut a figure there; or indeed to any watering place of equal notoriety, where she could be equally conspicuous and admired. But her father was not always willing to incur the expense of these fashionable jaunts. He, indeed, was glad to gratify his daughter; still his means were inadequate to her demands. One fashionable dress must be constantly exchanged for another—the satin for the morie antique—the one of fixed for another of changeable colors. Mrs. Cameron, too, had no fancy for scenes of public gaiety and fashion. Home was dearer to her than any other place. She regretted, therefore, to see her daughter so fond of fashionable resorts. But there was no restraining her taste; and too often her father yielded to her entreaties.

Her cousin Lucy Cameron was a young lady of quite a different cast of character. Possibly not so handsome, yet if not a blooming rose, she was a modest lily; and if her charms were so prominent, they were more durable. Ella's, indeed, were rather artificial than natural; pleasing for the moment, then left to fade. Lucy's were the more grateful the longer they were before the eye.

Amongst Ella's admirers had been a young man of the name of Darnley. In fact, he was an admirer still and yet with little satisfaction to himself, for he felt, that if, to-day he was accepted to be loved, he might be set aside! Sometimes, his heart inclined him to Lucy Cameron, instead of her cousin Ella. Still he desired to keep up the appearance of consistency in his attentions to Ella, though she was of all his acquaintances the most inconsistent. Regretting his obligations to Ella, and anxious all the time to be released from her, yet he would not take the initiative; preferring rather, that that movement should be taken by her. Indeed, as he knew that Ella, like the butterfly that flits from flower to flower, was ever on the watch for a new admirer, so he was fully convinced, that ere long he should easily get a release, or a rejection; either of which was now the name to him, as Ella would soon hit upon a new beau. He was aware that his fair lady was to go to the Springs, and that there was the place where admiration would be most sought; and beauty most admired! He knew too, that there butterflies would have their match; that belles and beaux—like heartless and penniless—would there meet. He had little doubt, therefore, that the way would soon be clear for him to pay his regards to his now more loved Lucy.

Darnley was invited by Ella to go to the

Spring the invitation being given either out of compliment, or as she desired not to go there wholly unattended. One beau she knew could easily be set aside for another, this being the privilege of ladies of her cast of Character; and Darnley now a convenience could be rejected for one more desirable.

Darnley accordingly accompanied the party, consisting of Ella and her parents, Lucy declining to go, though she had the offer of going, on the part of her uncle.

The day after the arrival of the party at Saratoga, another party arrived equally desirous of distinction and success in their designs. Especially was Mr. B. of the last arrival a conspicuous personage. His appearance indicated wealth and influence. Ella was peculiarly pleased with his looks. Darnley began to sink in her estimation; and the more he sank, the more did Mr. B. rise! Darnley felt slighted;—he saw his game was up; not a chance even was left him now to throw a die! As soon as possible he left; to return, however, in a few days. Mr. B. was now highly delighted. No one was in his way. To get an introduction had been easy—to accomplish the remainder of his design, he fancied would be easier. And so it was. He was soon engaged to the beautiful Ella. Brilliant prospects now rose before him. Ella, he knew, must be rich—for all that go to Saratoga know that all others there are rich. She, also, knew that he was wealthy; for how could one be so genteel, so imposing, so much the gentleman, unless indeed he was wealthy! Ella, of course, was in fine spirits; her fortune was now made; and made too at Saratoga! Somebody at least had done well by going there.

The gentleman thought the same; that is for a day or two he thought so; then lo! another train of visitors was at hand. And now who could these new comers be? One was Colonel Clinton from Alabama! "What a noble looking man was he!" And he was married?

"No!" Ella began to think she had been premature with Mr. B., and he began to be in the way. "O!" said she, "isn't that Colonel Clinton, a nabob! My! what a splendid carriage he came in! and see his uniform! O! the buttons! Well, I have heard of the buttons before; there is a charm in them to be sure! Don't you think so Mr. B.?"

Mr. B. soon took the place of Darnley, and Colonel Clinton was his substitute. "Curse the Springs," said he, "if this is what you call going to Saratoga, away with it!"

The next morning he disappeared, and when Ella looked for him at the table he was gone!

Colonel Clinton now had full sweep! Ella was delighted. "Why such a Colonel as he could take the whole French army at once, and England too!" And Ella was pleased too to think that she could take him! This was a capture indeed!

The next week Darnley arrived. Of course he didn't come within speaking distance of his former intended. She merely bowed to him across the table.

He, however, enquired into the character of the gallant Colonel, and found that he was a mere impostor. Gladly would he have communicated this intelligence to Ella, not for his own sake but for her future welfare; yet as he presumed it would not be believed, he merely left a note to her address containing the words "Ella Beware!"

He in his absence from the Springs, feeling that he was released from his obligations to Ella since she had virtually cast him off, directed his attentions to Lucy; who being informed of the occurrence at the Springs, consented to his overtures and engaged to be his.

Whilst Ella was thus carrying on her flirtations at Saratoga, her father and mother were by no means at ease in their mind. They did not approve of the conduct of their daughter, and trembled at the probable consequences.

"Who is this Colonel?" they enquired. "What is his character?—his condition in life? Has he any property?"

Possibly he has been cashed or has been no Colonel at all! These things they suggested to Ella. She was astonished! astonished that such reflections should be cast on so distinguished a man! Why if they couldn't believe such a man, whom could they believe? Mr. Cameron thought they had better leave; if the Colonel was disposed to marry his daughter, he could visit her at home—he could exhibit some of his credentials—he might be a Colonel and he might not!

Ella was in tears! "He was the only man she really ever did love. The only one—and the only one she ever should! And now she couldn't be allowed to marry him!" "And why couldn't she?" Surely he was a gentleman and an officer too!"

"To-morrow," said Mr. Cameron, "we go home. These Springs have robbed me of my purse, and now are going to rob me of my daughter!" The old gentleman slept little that night; his daughter less.

The Colonel too was plotting for an adventure! "A moment," said Ella to her father, "I wish to bid the Colonel good-bye."

"Yes, forever!" said he. "Father, do you wish to break my heart?" "No! and if you will give it to Darnley it will be in safe keeping!"

"Father, I cannot give it to him; and besides he does not want it now!" "He is going to accompany us home."

"Then I don't wish to go!" "You don't?" "He has slighted me!" "No wonder."

"But can't I love whom I please?" "Yes, if you will love what is lovely." "The Colonel is all the world to me!" "That may be, and nothing at that?"

"O! cruel father! can you treat your daughter so?" "Go and bid the Colonel good-bye."

Ella went. The Colonel received her to his arms and said "And must I leave you forever?"

"O! no," said she—"meet me again at Saratoga. My father invites you there!"

"No," said he, "in three days I must be on duty! My furlough expires in two!"

"And can you not come to Saratoga then at all?" "When I cannot tell. Meet me, to-morrow morning, Ella, at seven o'clock: do you understand? the carriage will be ready."

"Six, Colonel."

"No, my dear Ella, that will excite suspicion. Be ready at the moment, and flee!"

The morning came. The carriage was at the door. Ella sprang into it, the wheels flew like lightning! The next state was gained, the preacher called in. Alas! for Ella. Darnley was there! The railroad cars had outstripped the carriage—

"Ella! Ella!" said he. "O! Darnley! my enemy, my enemy! why do you pursue me?"

"Ella, this Colonel is an impostor! he is just from the Tombs!"

"You are a villain!" cried the Colonel. The door flew open. Two constables sprang in.

"These gentlemen are not," said Darnley, "you know them too—Colonel!" The Colonel hung his head, and was silent.

From an unpublished volume, by our Cor. Ed.

TO ANXIE.
BY ROSE G. STAPLES.
I've sat beside the casement, love—
And gazed the darkness through;
Until the calm moon rode upon
The sea of azure hue;
And vapors—shadowy clouds
Above the tranquil scene,
Drank in the effulgent radiance,
Of night's acknowledged queen.

At morning's twilight, ere old Sol
Had greeted with his ray,
Yon lofty spire, or silent dome,
To herald in the day;
Beside the waters in their flow—
I've sat in quiet long;
Ere earth was yet alive unto
The raptur'd jost of song.

Beneath the forest's giant oak,
When wild winds furious past,
In angry winter, when the ship
Was rudely by them cast;
A silent prayer I then would breathe
To God, my love—for thee;
That he would safely guide thee o'er
Life's dark and dreary sea.

PRIZE STORY.
WRITTEN FOR THE TIMES.
FANNY MOWBRAY;
OR,
The Gambler's Wife.

A STORY OF THE HEART.
BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

CHAPTER I.
It was morning; the sun rose in splendor, and as he cleared the lofty chimneys and house-tops, his warm rays fell upon a half opened window, partly shaded by a thin curtain, lest the soft, refreshing breeze should too abruptly into the sad and silent room;—silent—though the iron-grasp of suffering lay heavily upon the shrunken limbs of a worn and dying woman;—silent—though the tears fell fast from the swollen lids of a tall, graceful boy, as he bent his flushed cheek to the pallid lips of his gentle mother, scarcely able, even with his quick ear, to catch the imperfect words, as they came in feeble, broken accents on every hard drawn breath from the parched and fevered lips.

By the bed side sat a rosy child of some five summers, unconscious of the coming sorrow, and as the invalid gazed upon that beaming face, a wild glistering of the sunken eyes, a tremulous grasp, were all the outward signs of the deep love and care that filled every avenue of the dying woman's heart. But for the thoughts of that fair child, the dark valley would have lost all its terrors; all else was peace; but while life remained, memory clung to the hard trials of her bereaved and neglected childhood—want and temptation battling before her vision, as in years, till the exhausted heart beat strong, and the firm grasp seemed to give a token of invigorated life—it was the last flicker of the lamp, the last effort of the ebbing spirit.

Every faint sound of that loved voice struck upon the heart of the young listener, until his smothered sorrow broke forth in sobs of agony and despair. He saw, through a long dim vista of coming years, the fair girl springing into womanhood; he knew, though only sixteen, the trust imposed upon him. Thought followed thought, and gathered in lines of care, frowning for a moment the pale, anxious brow, as though fifty winters of toil and sorrow had pressed their icy fingers there.

He knelt by the bed, with one arm supporting the dear head upon his bosom, holding tighter, tighter, with every throb of his full heart, the form that was so soon to be crumbling with its fellow dust.

Heavier and heavier grew the weight in the trembling arms of the boy, a wandering movement of the thin fingers; as if seeking something to grasp; a quiver of the darkening lids; a thicker, shorter breath—another, another; a heave of the collapsed chest; and the peaceful spirit had passed away, even as a tender infant falls to rest upon the last weak sob of its half forgotten grief.

"Live, mother—live for us," burst from the boy's bloodless lips, as he gently waved back the kind friends, who offered to release him from his precious burden; "live for her sake; I am too powerless to protect her."

All was silent, he had striven to cheat his heart with the belief that life still lingered there. He was answered but too well; he knew that his appeal would not have been in vain; he pressed his hand upon the still heart—no throbs responded to his touch. One long agonizing cry rang upon the stillness of the grave, and he sunk helpless, lifeless, beside the stiffening corpse.

With a vague expression of awe, little Fannie hid her flushed face with her hands, and unconscious of death, she stole a look at the altered features of her mother, from between her dimpled fingers, and shrinking slowly backwards, whispered, "What is the matter, Edward? mama is so pale," and finding he did not answer, the terror

so natural to childhood seemed to overwhelm her. Still gazing on the bed, she crept quietly to the window, and threw back the curtain, as if there were more protection in the open air, than in that dark and silent room.

The warm sun shone brightly alike upon the living and the dead, still side by side, and equally unconscious of the sorrows of this toilsome life. One must return to its broad path and fulfill the mission for which heaven has ordained him—the other rested its immortal part safe upon the everlasting shore.

It is a fearful sensation, that of striving to recollect what has happened, on our awakening from the first sleep, when a deep distress has fallen upon us. Then it is that the sudden reaction of the heart sets madly to work the flagging feeble pulse, till we could, in every agony of soul, pray for that torpor that has so long stolen us from ourselves, and shut out the dark secret of our woe.

Thus rose Edward Mowbray, the morning following that of his mother's death, after the long lull, to feel, with anguish ten times more poignant, the sorrow of the preceding day. All the wealth that remained to him in the world, was the small sum of seventy-five dollars, the little savings from an annuity granted by the employers of his late father, in recognition of twenty years tried and faithful services as clerk. They had secured two hundred dollars yearly to his widow during her life, but no mention was made of the children in case of her decease, which might have been expected to take place in their earlier years, as the most careless observer could plainly trace the rapid decay of the delicate woman after the death of her good and affectionate husband.

Strangers offered kind advice for the welfare of the orphan; and many, whom heaven had blessed with substance, volunteered donations, to be applied to their use. On the morning of the funeral, the children of more than one parent were led to the quiet church yard, that they might remember in their prayers that night, the lone and desolate, and feel more forcibly their duty to the living and contrast their own unbecoming state with that of the mourning children upon the coffin of their mother.

Hand in hand they left the grave; the boy passive and resigned, every power of thought and action seeming to be closed up forever in that sacred spot; and not until the good pastor expressed the wish that they would become the inmates of his house till some better plan could be arranged, did he manifest a desire to speak words of the past. He then urged in a few mild words his determination to pass one more night beneath the roof of that dear home, where all would bring back his mother's image to his sight, and to collect such things as memory would cherish in other days—then on the following morning to bid farewell to all forever. There was a steady tone in the boy's voice, a meaning in every word—that none ventured to oppose; a firmness that argued well the strong mind of coming manhood—the bend of the good bow, which, though yielding to the archer's power, would never break.

Edward kept his word, and joined his sister at the parsonage. They remained there for some few weeks, when by assistance of friends, the boy was placed with a merchant in the city of Baltimore, and Fannie—the gentle and innocent Fannie—entrusted to the care of a kind lady in Elliott's Mills, who offered to educate her for seven years.

The parting was most severe; Edward almost felt as if his mother clid him for leaving her precious trust to the care of strangers; but what could he do? He must submit, and as the coach rattled across the smooth stones, he laid plans for the future—plans of hope and youth. One look as he passed the cottage, one hasty glance upon the last few of those cherished flowers; a long, long look, as he stood up to see once more through his streaming tears, that lonely, humble grave;—from that moment all the boy was gone; everything wore a sadder, graver tint; life was before him, a home to be made for the dear one left behind. He sat with his arms folded, his eyes on vacancy—a man in all but age.

CHAPTER II.
Ten years from the commencement of our story, one cold stormy day in December, there was leaning heavily against the counter of a small shop in Elliott's Mills, a slight, fair girl, thinly but neatly clad, and watching with eager anxious eyes, the hard countenance of a tall, meagre woman, who now and then glanced sideways from a letter which she was reading, alternately at the face, figure, and apparel of the stranger.

After a last scrutinizing survey from head to foot, she said in a snappish tone: "So you are Miss Mowbray. I presume—Fannie Mowbray—eh? Is that it young woman?"

"Yes, madam," said the girl mildly. "Fannie was the name my dear mother called me."

"There—don't speak in such a whining tone, young woman; you make me nervous. If you come here, I shall call you Fannie, we have no Misses in my establishment."

Fannie, though worried and distressed in mind, could scarcely repress a smile at Mrs. Yates' idea of dignity, and replied that she preferred being called by her Christian name, as it reminded her of other days.

"Of other nonsense," said Mrs. Yates—"you must forget other days, Fannie Mowbray, you must think of work, and make it worth my while to keep you, I like what Mrs. Noyes says about you, and as you can manage fine work neatly, braid and embroider, I think—yes I will give you a dollar a week and your tea, if that will suit."

"Is that all, madam?" "All, you little extortioner, all. What on earth do you require more in a first class establishment? Let me tell you I don't care about it for one half that sum, only for Mrs. Noyes, who has been an excellent customer, and I am expecting another order every day. All indeed."

Grumbling over the last few words, Mrs. Yates tumbled over in her rage some bits of worsted, which, upon examination, assumed the shape of little shoes with square toes and thick heels. But without deigning another glance at Fannie, she continued in her sharp angry tones. "There, you can go, young woman, and think of it. How you stare. It's very rude to stare; let me tell you; abominably ungrateful; never stare."

"Thank you, madam," said Fannie, innocently, "I will call some time to-morrow," and she closed the door, which was gaily decorated with ribbons, flowers, and laces, in most intricate confusion.

Scarcely had she reached the bottom steps of the establishment, when a riotous rapping at the window induced her to turn round, and there, in the midst of laces, was the mahogany face of Mrs. Yates, looking like an old picture that had been scraped every year for the last half century. What the face meant by its extraordinary expression—whether rage or entreaty, command or defiance—it would have required a second Lavater to determine. Fannie, after much deliberation, concluded that it was intended to induce a retrograde movement on her part; and consequently she reascended the steps, and gently opened the door.

"What—couldn't you understand my signs?" said Mrs. Yates, looking daggers. "No, madam," said Fannie, "I did not think you were looking at me."

"Well, young woman, I was going to say, and therefore do say, that if you have no work on hand, and as it is Monday, and we are very busy, and it isn't more than ten o'clock; you can stop if you like till half past nine, and that will make a half a day. Are you satisfied?"

"I must be, I suppose," thought Fannie, and so she answered with as much sincerity as she could muster; "Yes, madam."

Mrs. Yates smiled—yes—in reality smiled, "yes madam," repeated Fannie, as she reflected that the smallest trifle of her own earnings would be a blessing, compared to living on the bounty of others. "Yes, madam, and thank you, I will accept the situation, and do the best I can to deserve it."

"That's better," smirked Mrs. Yates, "and let me tell you that one dollar a week and your tea, is handsome payment."

Fannie curtsied, but was no convert to her doctrine.

"There then," said Mrs. Yates, "go in, stop, take off your cloaks first; there—that's the workroom—the best part of the house. I assure you I always study the comfort of my people; and pointing to a miserable, cold, dingy apartment, where some dozen of tall thin girls were busily plying the needle, stealing now and then hasty glances into the shop, that they might be fully prepared for the unwelcome entrance of their stiff unfeeling mistress.

Fannie opened the door, and entered the work-room, to the no small amazement of the astonished operatives.

"Good morning, young ladies," she said; and a bland "good morning" was returned by all, the ice being completely broken by the soft sweet tones of her young voice.

"Are you come to work," said one, much older than the others; Miss Lucy Brown was the lady's name—she was the head of Mrs. Yates establishment.

"She's not come to play, I'll be sworn," said a little, fat dimpled mouth, belonging to Miss Arthur.

A short, suppressed laugh, followed by the hasty glance at the shop window, proved the truth of this assertion, and soon Fannie began her labors, cheered on by the girls who prophesied that she might be a little less snubbed then they were, because she would prove more valuable in the house.

Miss Arthur soon discovered a deep sympathy for Fannie, and was not slow to offer her sincere friendship. Of a warm and kindly disposition, she had taken pity on the forlorn state of Miss Mowbray, and

by her actions strove to make Fannie forget her trials.

Miss Brown the head of the establishment, was a vain, simple old maid, who every evening at seven precisely, would take her seat by the window, and watch for a smart, handsome fellow, on a grey horse, who passed the shop morning and night, to and from his office. Miss Brown imagined he wanted something—and so he did—endeavoring for ten weeks to discover what that vigilant female was aiming at; therefore, taking no further interest in Miss Brown's face, he decamped one fine morning, leaving the lady in doubt whether matrimony, change of air, or any epidemic had taken off the handsome vision of her persevering attentions.

After a succession of cruel disappointments, Miss Brown installed Miss Arthur in her place at the usual hour of watching, and as Fannie was a favorite, she allowed her, as an excuse, for more light, to sit in company with the merry girl. One evening, after a month's useless watching, Fannie sat closest to the window, with her bright face turned up towards the light;—as she paused one moment from her work, the tramp of a horse's feet was heard. Miss Arthur had forgotten to look, and again the stranger passed loitering visibly, as his eye met the full gaze of the thoughtful girl. One of those impulses that we cannot account for, induced him to return the old way that night; in a second, the caps and laces were rumpled together, and Fannie leant back, blushing from the window. Why she blushed, she could not have told; why she thought of that handsome stranger for hours afterwards, she could not answer even to herself; why she dreamed of him, after a day of toil and fatigue, she did not know, but at the same hour her fair face sought, unseen, on the following evening to catch another glimpse of the gay and handsome equestrian. Again he passed, and again she dreamed.

CHAPTER III.
Truly a business place was the store of Charles Hall's and young men were bustling here and there, doing something and nothing every moment. Edward Mowbray, a pale, delicate looking man of six and twenty, sat by the desk, receiving the accounts, and writing "paid" thereon, handing them to an odd, large headed boy, who took the receipts to the customers with as much grave importance as if he were giving a check valuable enough to liquidate the national debt.

"Here, climb up youngster, and hand me down that bundle of shawls—no, that is wrong, the one to the left. What a stupid boy you are—come down. Here—" and the shopman pulled the boy down, who found his level on all fours behind the counter.

"Why didn't you keep Mr. Mowbray?" said the shopman. "Ah, I ask pardon; I forgot he ain't a clerk now—cos' he are going to marry Miss Mary Hall."

Whether Edward Mowbray noticed the spleen of the port shopman, may be quite a matter of opinion. He did not in any way acknowledge it, however, but continued very quietly writing at his desk, but in spite of his calmness, it must have been sorely annoying to find himself the butt of the envious young men around him. Some asserted that he must be a pretty fellow in a lady's eye, as he had won the stern heart of Mary Hall.

The boy Nick knew best about that. Nick was a clever, useful fellow, hopping about every body's heels like a jackdaw—picking up this, and picking up that, and turning all to account. Born in the service of Mr. Hall, he had heard strange things about uncle and niece, many wranglings about somebody's money being wrongfully employed—much about a sister's children unacknowledged—and in fact, all sorts of odds and scraps; so that Nick had them all at his finger ends, and would let them out, or pull them in, as a first-rate horse-man would a dozen horses. Nick, too, not formed by nature in a handsome model, yet had a heart, a true, warm loving heart for at least two people in the world—Edward Mowbray and his sister Fannie. Edward had sought and obtained a situation in the same city where his sister resided, so as to be able to protect and counsel her. His kindness had won the heart of little Nick, and though snubbed by all, yet the boy bore on patiently, hoping that a better time might arrive for his kind friends. The plot was not yet ripe; he would be branded as an impudent deceiver, should he reveal at once all he had been gleaming from childhood.

This one day in particular seemed especially set apart for his benefit in the scolding and cuffing way. "Never mind," said Nick, half in rage and half in tears; "never mind—the wretches—he'll find them out yet—Mr. Hall will; I'll help him without seeming to try it—I'll nab them—she's a case too—that delicate Miss Mary."

Wiping his eyes, and entering the shop, he tapped Edward gently on the shoulder, and said: "I've got a message for you. Miss Mary wants you to call a little earlier than usual to night, she's got something to tell you."

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"Why didn't you keep Mr. Mowbray?" said the shopman. "Ah, I ask pardon; I forgot he ain't a clerk now—cos' he are going to marry Miss Mary Hall."

Whether Edward Mowbray noticed the spleen of the port shopman, may be quite a matter of opinion. He did not in any way acknowledge it, however, but continued very quietly writing at his desk, but in spite of his calmness, it must have been sorely annoying to find himself the butt of the envious young men around him. Some asserted that he must be a pretty fellow in a lady's eye, as he had won the stern heart of Mary Hall.

The boy Nick knew best about that. Nick was a clever, useful fellow, hopping about every body's heels like a jackdaw—picking up this, and picking up that, and turning all to account. Born in the service of Mr. Hall, he had heard strange things about uncle and niece, many wranglings about somebody's money being wrongfully employed—much about a sister's children unacknowledged—and in fact, all sorts of odds and scraps; so that Nick had them all at his finger ends, and would let them out, or pull them in, as a first-rate horse-man would a dozen horses. Nick, too, not formed by nature in a handsome model, yet had a heart, a true, warm loving heart for at least two people in the world—Edward Mowbray and his sister Fannie. Edward had sought and obtained a situation in the same city where his sister resided, so as to be able to protect and counsel her. His kindness had won the heart of little Nick, and though snubbed by all, yet the boy bore on patiently, hoping that a better time might arrive for his kind friends. The plot was not yet ripe; he would be branded as an impudent deceiver, should he reveal at once all he had been gleaming from childhood.

This one day in particular seemed especially set apart for his benefit in the scolding and cuffing way. "Never mind," said Nick, half in rage and half in tears; "never mind—the wretches—he'll find them out yet—Mr. Hall will; I'll help him without seeming to try it—I'll nab them—she's a case too—that delicate Miss Mary."

Wiping his eyes, and entering the shop, he tapped Edward gently on the shoulder, and said: "I've got a message for you. Miss Mary wants you to call a little earlier than usual to night, she's got something to tell you."

Miss Arthur soon discovered a deep sympathy for Fannie, and was not slow to offer her sincere friendship. Of a warm and kindly disposition, she had taken pity on the forlorn state of Miss Mowbray, and

by her actions strove to make Fannie forget her trials.

Miss Brown the head of the establishment, was a vain, simple old maid, who every evening at seven precisely, would take her seat by the window, and watch for a smart, handsome fellow, on a grey horse, who passed the shop morning and night, to and from his office. Miss Brown imagined he wanted something—and so he did—endeavoring for ten weeks to discover what that vigilant female was aiming at; therefore, taking no further interest in Miss Brown's face, he decamped one fine morning, leaving the lady in doubt whether matrimony, change of air, or any epidemic had taken off the handsome vision of her persevering attentions.

After a succession of cruel disappointments, Miss Brown installed Miss Arthur in her place at the usual hour of watching, and as Fannie was a favorite, she allowed her, as an excuse, for more light, to sit in company with the merry girl. One evening, after a month's useless watching, Fannie sat closest to the window, with her bright face turned up towards the light;—as she paused one moment from her work, the tramp of a horse's feet was heard. Miss Arthur had forgotten to look, and again the stranger passed loitering visibly, as his eye met the full gaze of the thoughtful girl. One of

